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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/726,929

12/03/2003

Charles R. Bleich

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EXAMINER

COBURN, CORBETT B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3714

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

09/13/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/726,929

Applicant(s)

BLEICH ET AL.

Examiner

Corbett B. Coburn

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3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 July 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 55-92 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 55-70 and 80-92 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 71-79 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 December 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date See Continuation Sheet.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____.

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date
:2/22/07;9/26/05;7/8/05;10/25/04;5/3/04;3/15/04;12/3/03.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it should describe the currently claimed invention. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).
2. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

3. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: Intelligent Button for a Gaming Machine.

Drawings

4. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the subject matter claimed in the negative limitations discussed below must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet,

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even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Election/Restrictions

5. Claims 55-70 & 80-92 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 10 July 2007.

6. Applicant's election with traverse of claims 71-79 in the reply filed on 10 July is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the inventions are closely related and that the burden of searching would not be great. This is not found persuasive because the non-elected claims are drawn to the physical details of the button's construction & function. These details are not found in the elected invention & the search necessary to find the mechanical details would be unduly burdensome.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

8. Claims 71-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Claim 71 contains the negative limitation, “the memory being associated solely with the game button and not another game button.” This is not supported by the specification. Since the claims in question were added after the initial filing, it does not appear that Applicant had possession of this limitation at the time of filing. Claim 72 has a similar negative limitation, as do claims 74 & 75. Negative limitations must be explicitly supported by the specification. These are not.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 71-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mattice et al. (US Patent Number 6,454,649)

Claim 71: Mattice teaches a game button with at least one variable display (612) capable of presenting a plurality of images thereon. There is a memory communicatively coupled with the at least one variable display – the variable display could not work without such a memory. The memory must be adapted to store information for producing the plurality of images presented on the display. Mattice is silent on whether game buttons share memory, but having the memory be associated solely with the game button and not another game button is a matter of design choice for which no stated problem is solved, or unexpected result obtained. Furthermore, since this feature is not described in the specification, it cannot be said to be a critical feature.

Claim 72: The stored information is utilized by the at least one variable display of the game button. Allowing the stored information to be accessed by another game button is a matter of design choice.

Claim 73: Mattice teaches a variable display that is a liquid crystal display. (Col 1, 8-9)

Claim 74: Mattice teaches memory included in a microcontroller also including a microprocessor, the microcontroller being communicatively coupled to the at least one variable display. (Figs 6 & 7) The microcontroller is associated solely with the game button, the microcontroller controlling the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display.

Claim 75: The microcontroller controls the presentation of the plurality of images on the at least one variable display associated with the game button and does not control the presentation of images on any display not associated with the game button. CPU (518)

controls the display on the slot machine screen or reels. The microcontroller depicted in Fig 7 controls the buttons.

Claim 76: The microcontroller is communicatively coupled to a gaming machine controller (518). (Fig 5)

Claim 77: Mattice discloses that the microcontroller communicates with the controller via a bus. (Col 9, 55) While Mattice does not specifically disclose a universal serial bus interface, this is an industry standard. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Mattice to use a universal serial bus in order to conform to industry standards.

Claim 78: Mattice discloses that the microcontroller may be communicatively coupled to a server controller (532). The microcontroller can clearly be programmed to present at least one image on the variable display in response to receiving a transmitted signal from the server controller.

Claim 79: Mattice teaches animation. (Col 3, 18-20)

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Corbett B. Coburn whose telephone number is (571) 272-4447. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30, Monday-Friday, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Pezzuto can be reached on (571) 272-6996. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Corbett B. Coburn/
Primary Examiner
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